

California Department of Justice
DIVISION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT
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Chief



INFORMATION BULLETIN

Subject:

System Integrity of the CalGang Database

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TO: ALL CALIFORNIA LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

On July 10, 2020 the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) announced that the agency would permanently withdraw from participation in the CalGang shared database “given the extent of the inaccurate information found, including instances of false information” in LAPD’s entries in the database.

Accordingly, DOJ has revoked access to entries originating from LAPD and any other information entered into the database by LAPD. Given LAPD’s concerns about the extent of inaccurate information in the data it generated, LAPD entries and data will not be available to LAPD or any other law enforcement agency. Only specified system administrators will continue to have access to LAPD entries and data solely for the purpose of removing individuals and entries from CalGang, assisting in the investigation and prosecution of those who abused the database, responding to inquiries or challenges by individuals about their inclusion in the database, or other DOJ-approved activities. This restriction will not affect auditing activity or the automatic deletion of records that have reached their expiration date.

In light of the findings from LAPD’s internal audit, DOJ strongly encourages each user agency — if it has not already done so — to conduct a thorough audit of its own entries and determine whether such entries can be verified and are supported by “reasonable suspicion” that the individual in question is engaged in criminal gang activity.¹ In addition, per its authority under AB 90,² DOJ will be conducting targeted audits of agency entries and practices regarding CalGang.

DOJ understands that the law enforcement community considers the CalGang database an important tool for sharing intelligence regarding criminal street gangs and helping law enforcement agencies investigate crimes. The CalGang database offers the most value to anti-crime efforts when the officers who utilize it receive high-quality information from it. At the same time, false and improper entries in the system call into question the integrity of the system and undermine the public’s trust in law enforcement.

¹ 28 C.F.R. Part 23.

² Assem. Bill No. 90 (2017–2018 Reg. Sess.).